

Chapter 12

4. *The great dragon (the Diuel) watching the woman that brought forth a man child, to deuoure it, God tooke away the child to himself, and fed the woman in the defert. 7. Michael fighting with the dragon ouercommeth him. 13. Who being thrown downe to earth, persecuteth the woman and her feed.*

THE 3. PART.
The Dragons
incredulous
& persecut-
ing multitude,
and Antichrist
the cheefe head
thereof.

And a great figne appeared in heauen, ^a) a woman clothed with the funne, and the moone vnder her feet, & on her head a crowne of twelue ftarres: ² and being with child, ſhe cried alfo traueling, and is in anguiſh to be deliuered. ³ And there was ſeen another figne in heauen, and behold a great red dragon hauing ſeuen heads, & ten hornes: and on his heads ſeuen diadems, ⁴ and his taile drew ^b) the third part of the ftarres of heauen, and caſt them to the earth: and the dragon ſtood before the woman which was ready to be deliuered; that when ſhe ſhould be deliuered, he might ^c) deuoure her ſonne. ⁵ And ſhe brought forth a man child, who was to gouerne al Nations in an yron rodde; & her ſonne was taken vp to God and to his throne, ⁶ & ^d) the woman fled into the wilderneſſe where ſhe had a place prepared of God, that there they might feed her a thouſand two hundred fixtie daies.

The great Diuel
Lucifer.

*Pf. 2, 9.
Apoc. 2, 27.*

⁷ And there was made ^d) a great battel in heauen, Michael and his Angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon fought and his Angels: ⁸ and they preuailed not, neither was their place found any more in heauen. ⁹ And that great dragon was caſt forth, the old ſerpent, which is called the Diuel and Satan, which feduceth the whole world: and he was caſt into the earth, & his Angels

^a This is properly and principally fpoken of the Church: and by alluſiō of our B. Lady alfo.

^b The ſpirits that fal from their firſt ſtate into Apoſtaſie with him and by his meanes.

^c The Diuels endeauour againſt the Churches children, and ſpecially our B. Ladies only Sonne the head of the reſt.

were throwen downe with him. ¹⁰ And I heard a great voice in heauen faying: Now is there made faluation and force, and the Kingdom of our God, and the power of his Chrif: becaufe the accufer of our Brethren is caft forth, who accused them before the fight of our God day and night. ¹¹ And ^a)they ouercame him by the bloud of the Lamb, and by the word of their teftimonie, and they loued not their liues euen vnto death. ¹² Therefore reioyce, ô heauens, and you that dwel therein. Woe to the earth & to the fea, becaufe the Diuel is defcended to you, hauing great wrath, knowing that he hath a litle time.

¹³ And after the dragon faw that he was thrown into the earth, he perfecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child: ¹⁴ and there were giuen to the woman two wings of a great Egle, that fhe might flie into the defert vnto her place, where fhe is nourifhed for ^b)a time & times, & halfe a time, from the face of the ferpent. ¹⁵ And the ferpent caft out of his mouth after the woman, water as it were a floud: that he might make her [♣]to be caried away with the floud. ¹⁶ And the earth holpe the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and fwallowed vp the floud which the dragon caft out of his mouth. ¹⁷ And the dragon was angrie againft the woman: and went to make battel with the reft of her feed, which keep the commandements of God, and haue the teftimonie of IESVS Chrif. ¹⁸ And he ftood vpon the fand of the fea.

ANNOTATIONS

6 The woman fled.) This great perfecution that the Church fhall fly from, is in the time of Antichrift, and fhall endure but three

The Church fhall fly as to a defert in Antichrifts time, but not decay or be vnknown, no not for fo short a time.

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- ^a When the Angels or we haue the victorie, we muft know it is by the bloud of Chrif, and fo al is referred alwaies to him.
- ^b This often infinuation that Antichrifts reigne fhall be but three yeares & a halfe (*Dā. 7, 25. Apoc. 11, 2. 3. & in this chap. v. 6. c. 13, 5.*) proueth that the heretikes be exceedingly blinded with malice, that hold the Pope to be Antichrift, who hath ruled fo manie Ages.

yeares and a halfe, as is noted *v. 14. in the margent.* In which time for al that, she shal not want our Lordes protection, nor true Paftours, nor be fo secrect, but al faithful men shal know and follow her: much leffe shal she decay, erre in faith, or degenerate and follow Antichrift, as Heretikes doe wickedly feine. As the Church Catholike now in England in this time of perfecution, becaufe it hath not publike ftate of regiment nor open free exercife of holy functions, may be laid to be fled into the defert, yet it is neither vnknownen to the faithful that follow it, nor the enemies that perfecute it: as the hid company that the proteftants talke of, was for fome worlds together, neither knownen to their freinds nor foes, becaufe there was indeed none fuch for many Ages together. And this is true, if we take this flight for a very corporal retiring into wildernes. Where indeed it may be, and is of moft expounded, to be a fpiritual flight, by forfaking the ioyes and folaces of the world, & giuing herfelf to contemplation and penance, during the time of perfecution vnder Antichrift. And by enlarging the fenfe, it may alfo very wel fignifie the defolation and affliction that the Church fuffereth and hath suffered from time to time in this wildernes of the world, by al the fore-runners and Minifters of Antichrift, Tyrants and Heretikes.

7 A great battel.) In the Church there is a perpetual combat betwixt S. Michael (Protectour of the Church militant as he was fometime of the Iewes Synagogue *Dan. 10, 21.*) and his Angels, and the Diuel and his Minifters. The perfect victorie ouer whom, shal be at the iudgement. Marke here alfo the caufe why S. Michael is commonly painted fighting with a dragon.

S. Michael fighting with the dragon.

15 To be caried away.) By great perfecution he would draw her, that is, her children from the true faith: but euery one of the faithful elect, gladly bearing their part thereof, ouercome his tyrannie. At whose conftancie he being the more offended, worketh malicious attempts in affaulting the frailer fort, who are here fignified by *the reft of her feed that keep the commandements*, but are not fo perfect as the former.

Antichrifts attempts to draw from the true faith.